

2015

THE NEURO-HUDDLE

ADDRESSING THE CONCUSSION CRISIS IN FOOTBALL

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JANUARY 23, 2015

9AM-5PM

STAN SHERIFF CENTER

ED WONG HOSPITALITY ROOM

FULL DAY SEMINAR INCLUDING LUNCH AND RECEPTION

DONATIONS WELCOME

·FORMER NFL PLAYERS

·LEADING NEUROLOGISTS FROM
UCLA, BOSTON UNIVERSITY, UCSF

·HAWAI'I ATHLETES, COACHES,
DOCTORS, PARENTS



**Sponsored by the John Wilbur Legacy Fund, HCAMP,
and Galihir Law**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
January 16, 2015

CONTACT: Mia Noguchi
mia@lotuspondcomm.com
(808) 551-1649

FIRST “NEURO-HUDDLE” EVENT TO BE HELD IN HONOLULU IS ESTABLISHED BY FAMILY WHO OPTED OUT OF NFL CLASS ACTION TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY SETTLEMENT

The John Wilbur family cites the NFL’s “failure to honestly address the epidemic of devastating brain injuries affecting football players and fairly compensate living players while they are alive” as its reason for opting out of the NFL settlement

Who: John Wilbur Legacy Fund
What: Neuro-Huddle 2015
When: January 23, 2015, from 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Where: University of Hawaii, Stan Sheriff Center, Ed Wong Hospitality Room

HONOLULU, HAWAII – The John Wilbur Legacy Fund with the support of Galiher DeRobertis Waxman and the Hawai’i Concussion Awareness Management Program (HCAMP) will host the first ever Neuro-Huddle Conference at the University of Hawai’i Stan Sheriff Center – Ed Wong Hospitality Suite on January 23, 2015 from 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. The Neuro-Huddle is an all day event focused on bringing together stakeholders to discuss the issue of brain injuries as it relates to sports. The event is free and open to the public. Monetary donations are encouraged.

Neuro-Huddle 2015 is focused on the game of football and will share vital information on brain injury prevention, treatment, and general awareness. The late John Wilbur was an American football offensive lineman in the National Football League who played for the Dallas Cowboys, Los Angeles Rams and Washington Redskins. An anti-war and civil rights activist, Wilbur was the Players Association representative for the Dallas Cowboys and the treasurer of the NFLPA during his time with the Washington Redskins. Following his NFL career he became a business and sports leader in Honolulu. He was a professional players’ agent, coached special teams at the University of Hawai’i, and mentored many aspiring football players and athletes, supporting many football players from the Polynesian community.

John Wilbur was a victim of Chronic Traumatic Encephalopathy (CTE) that devastated his life and family. Based on the sound clinical impression of local Neurologist, Dr. David Kaminskas, Wilbur was clinically diagnosed with CTE at the age of 69, one full year before his death while living in Hawai’i. Dr. Kaminskas attributed the diagnosis to a decade of traumatic history from the NFL. Dr. Kaminskas is also a Clinical Assistant Professor of Neurology for the University of Hawai’i John A. Burns School of Medicine and Director of the Center for Headache and Facial Pain and Center for Stroke and Neurologic Restoration at Hawai’i Pacific Neuroscience. This clinical diagnosis was confirmed by autopsy following Wilbur’s death.

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At the time of Wilbur's death, his family and friends were appalled at the profound changes to his personality during the last years of his life, including a deep depression, anger and disorientation at performing once commonplace activities. His daughters, Lindsea Wilbur and Dione Smith, are key organizers of the event.

"After experiencing the debilitating, long-term effects of the undiagnosed brain injuries our father suffered after years of professional football, we want the Neuro-Huddle to showcase current research and disseminate knowledge relating to TBI in football at all levels," said Lindsea Wilbur. "We want to support more accountability, integrity and mindfulness in the sports culture to ensure future generations continue to benefit from athletic programs without the risk of long-term injury."

John Wilbur was one of 229 other NFL class opt-outs to the current, ongoing NFL Concussion Litigation settlement that was granted preliminary approval on July 7, 2014 by the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania. The class action settlement is still awaiting final approval.

Participating organizations for the 2015 Neuro-Huddle include the University of California Los Angeles Tisch BrainSPORT program, University of San Francisco Memory and Aging Center, Boston University CTE Center, Hawaii Pacific Neuroscience, and HCAMP.

HCAMP, which is a part of the University of Hawai'i at Manoa, Department of Kinesiology and Rehabilitation Science, is funded in partnership with the State of Hawai'i Department of Education and State of Hawai'i Department of Health. With its support, the Wilbur family would like to turn the Neuro-Huddle into an annual forum for discussion about the biomechanics, diagnosis, care and treatment of TBI and CTE.

"From those involved at all levels of football, to those who are responsible, as well as those who should be responsible for the advanced care and treatment for those suffering from CTE and dementia, all need to be involved in the conversation to protect our present and future athletes. We must also honor those who suffered the unforeseen injuries that negatively impacted their lives," said Galiher DeRobertis Waxman's Senior Partner Gary Galiher.

Thousands of youth athletes here in Hawaii and nationally are at risk for brain injury and CTE. Brains studied by Dr. Ann McKee at the VA-BU-SLI Brain Bank (ref: www.bu.edu/cte/our-research/brain-bank/) show repetitive brain trauma results in a build up of Tau (an abnormal protein) in football players as young as 18 years old. The Center for Disease Control calls brain injury (concussions) an "epidemic." Chris Nowinski, co-director of the Sports Legacy Institute, cited during an Aspen Institute panel, "High school players take 2,220 hits to the head in a year."

"Parents, players, and their coaches do not appreciate the fact that the football helmet has weaponized the most delicate organ in the human body. Rather than protecting the brain from concussions, the false sense of security created is the actual cause of the epidemic of concussions and the devastating and permanent long-term effects concealed by an illusion of safety. For decades, this fact has been recognized by the NFL and hidden from the public to ensure that the NFL continues to make billions of dollars in revenue," said Galiher.

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Convening leading researchers and physicians across multiple disciplines and former players and coaches from across the nation, including Hawaii, the John Wilbur Legacy Fund, HCAMP and Galiher DeRobertis Waxman want to directly address sports-related concussions that continue to rise, especially in contact sports such as football. The Neuro-Huddle is a platform for sharing ideas about innovations, prevention, diagnosis and treatment. For more information on the Neuro-Huddle visit www.johnwilburlegacy.com or call 808-597-1400 and ask for Lindsea Wilbur or Clarisse Kobashigawa.

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